PLEASE AMEND THE CLAIMS AS INDICATED BELOW:

Claim 1. (Canceled)

2. (Previously presented) A mold according to claim 10, wherein the contact member of the mold which is adapted to engage with the surface of the semiconductor chip, is in the form of a removable member which is mounted on one of the mold halves.

3. (Previously presented) A mold according to claim 2, wherein the removable member is mounted for movement relative to the mold half on which it is mounted.

4. (Currently Amended) A mold comprising:
two mold halves,
the mold including portions configured to define the shape of a cavity which receives molding material for encapsulating a semiconductor chip;
one of the mold halves including an aperture extending therethrough;
a removable contact member formed of a compressible material, the contact member being movably mounted on one of the mold halves and positioned in the aperture;
the contact member being so shaped and positioned that it is in contact with a surface of a semiconductor chip being encapsulated in the mold; and
~~A mold according to claim 3, further comprising~~ an element operative to bias the removable member into the mold cavity defined by the mold halves.

Claims 5-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A mold comprising:
two mold halves,
the mold including portions configured to define the shape of a cavity which receives molding material for encapsulating a semiconductor chip;

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one of the mold halves including an ~~aperture~~ an open passage extending therethrough; and

a contact member formed of a compressible material, and positioned in the ~~aperture;~~ open passage;

the contact member being so shaped and positioned that it is in contact with a surface of a semiconductor chip being encapsulated in the mold.

11. (Currently Amended) A mold comprising:

two mold halves,

the mold including portions configured to define the shape of a cavity which receives molding material for encapsulating a semiconductor chip;

one of the mold halves including an ~~aperture~~ open passage extending therethrough and

a contact member positioned in the ~~aperture~~ open passage,

the contact member being so shaped and positioned that a portion thereof is in contact with a portion of the surface of a semiconductor chip being encapsulated in the mold, and wherein

the portion of the contact member which is in contact with the portion of the surface of the semiconductor chip is so profiled as to minimize seepage of molding material onto the portion of the surface of the semiconductor chip during molding.

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